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***Operations and Services
TSUNAMI WARNING SERVICES
POST-TSUNAMI SURVEYS***

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Date

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1. United States Surveys. Tsunamis that cause five or more fatalities, numerous injuries and/or major property damage in the United States or its possessions, may be classified as significant natural disasters and a regional survey team should be dispatched to the affected area. The dispatching of this team should be in accordance with any National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and National Weather Service (NWS) directives regarding natural disaster surveys. The Tsunami Program Manager (TPM) and the Director, Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (W/OS) shall be notified when a survey team is being dispatched. Special attention should be given to obtaining information on the timing and magnitude of individual waves in the tsunami and on the limits of inundation in accordance with post-tsunami survey procedures established by International Tsunami Information Center (ITIC) in cooperation with domestic and international scientific and governmental bodies.

2. International Surveys. Tsunamis that cause moderate to severe damage in countries other than the United States may also be classified as major natural disasters and an ITIC survey team may be requested by Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) to survey the affected area. Coordination for international disaster surveys not requested by the IOC shall be handled by Weather Service Headquarters (WSH) and the Department of State (DOS), who are responsible for coordinating all surveys outside the United States or its possessions. Only after a formal request has been submitted to the DOS by the affected foreign country shall a survey team be organized to investigate tsunami damage and inundation in that country.

3. Special Circumstances. Under special circumstances, such as in Pacific-wide tsunamis, a survey team may be dispatched before formal requests for assistance from specific countries have been coordinated with WSH and/or DOS. NWS personnel may survey these affected areas under the auspices of ITIC but only when so designated by WSH or DOS. Personnel from other NOAA components may also participate in these surveys. Non-NWS personnel, such as the ITIC Associate Director, may proceed directly to the disaster area to conduct surveys irrespective of approvals from WSH or DOS. However, travel paid for with NWS funds must be approved by regional headquarters.

4. Survey Procedures. ITIC is in part responsible for developing the appropriate survey procedures in order to obtain accurate and meaningful tsunami run-up and earthquake data. Standardized survey instructions and procedures are made available to all participating nations by ITIC so that these countries can make their own surveys if they so desire.